

RÉSUMÉ MUSER 2003

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Nick Montfort and William Gillespie's recent palindromic page-turner, *2002: A Palindrome Story in 2002 Words* (see the back cover of *Word Ways*, August 2002) inspires this slightly less ambitious offering, entitled...

RÉSUMÉ MUSER 2003 A Palindromic *Cri de Coeur* in 2003 Letters

The scenario: Jeered, jarred, tarred, feathered and fired from his job as Reno's municipal fig leaf affixer, a shaken Ara Dias is feeling a bit down on himself when, still in feathers, he later drops in on sweetheart Edna, who lives with her bibulous aunt Edi...

"I'm a relieved, underrated, unrewarded, ired, derided, 'iced' nude-rober!" Ara Dias said.

"And...?" Edna Moody Byrd, missal put aside, regarded Ara. "Prate, *rara avis*—for Edna M.!"

"Alas, lass! A 'vapid pillager,' a 'sissy's sissy,' a 'soot-dwelling nit-lover,' a 'devil lintel raven,' a 'snide café droop,' a 'relapses-sender,' a 'red-algal stinker,' a 'rat,' a 'valet,' a 'rare dull Adelaides,' a 'revolting, nival, non-deltoid, ignitable, snug deity-calcifier,' a 'reveling nit,' a 'lulu,' a 'Reno-drapeer,' a 'mare-mired ode-sullier,' a 'bare-tarred, icy spitfire,' a 'yare, Zagreb-met Avar cow-tallier,' a 'rare flower,' a 'hare-darter,' a 'moody spider,' a 'yare zoo lion-rower,' a 'care-repaid, silly, ram-aloof mad decaf-gulper,' a 'rare poor tar,' a 'prawn-roper,' a bare 'glib damned allegor,' a 'hare-simple knee-starer,' a 'yare yap,' a 'gem,' a 'red'-named, stressed, defiled 'Eros-enrober,' an 'ever-evil lug,' a 'drab gob,' a 'tart sap,' a 'tangy nit,' a 'pupa-reviler,' a bare, too-legalistic 'illicit siren-rober,' a 'hare-warder,' a 'care-obtunded razz-igniter,' a 'wan, unaware, urn-like visa-user,' a rare 'zoo-bred, icy wart-sooter,' a bare 'rat-snide leerer,' a yare 'vast, listing nil-lifer,' a 'Reno-bleeder,' an 'ever-erudite' (yet 'aloe-crude') 'vile gar-evader,' a 'red, ired, erose Maltese Beowulf,' a 'red Danish serf,' a 'subtiny rat,' in a snide song—oh, a man-deep pain, gal!—a 'sere hare-hybrid' and a 'Samian-deported imam' am I! De trop, Edna—I'm a sad nadir, by Hera!

"Here's a lagniappe, Edna M.: a 'hog-nosed, insanitary nit bus,' a 'fresh sin-adder, a flu-woe-beset, lame 'sore-derider'(!), a 'red, average-lived, urceolate yeti-durer' (even a 'red eel-boner'!), a 'refilling nit-silt saver,' a 'yare, reeled-in starer,' a 'bare, too-strawy cider-boozer,' a 'rare suasive kiln-ruer,' a 'wan, unaware, tin-gizzard nut Boer,' a 'care-drawer,' a 'hare-born, eristic, illicit silage-looter,' a 'bare liver,' a 'pup,' a 'tiny gnat,' a 'past rat,' a 'bog bard' (a 'Gulliver,' even!), a 'reborne, sore' 'deli-fed desserts-demander,' a 'megapayer,' a 'yare, rat-seen kelp miser,' a 'hare-gel-laden mad bilger,' a 'bare porn-war paratrooper,' a 'rare plug-faced, damfool Amaryllis-diaperer,' a careworn 'oil-oozer,' a 'yare dipsy-doo mare-trader,' a 'hare-wolfer,' a 'rare ill,' a 'two-cravat ember-gazer,' a 'yare-if-tipsy cider-rater,' a bare, ill-used ode-rimer, a 'mare-pardoner,' a 'ululating nil, ever,' a 'reific, lacy, tied, gunsel-biting,

idiot-led, non-laving nit-lover,' a 'redialed alluder,' a 'ratel-avatar,' a 'reknit slag-lader,' a 'rednesses-paler,' a 'poor, defaced, insane varlet, nil-lived,' a 'revolting nil' ('lewd, too!' says Sissy's sis!), a 'regal-lip dip,' a 'vassal salamander of Siva,' a rare, tar-paraded rager---"

Edi sat up. "Lass, I'm *dry*, by doom!"

"...and, Edna," Dias said, "a rare, bored, undecided, ired, derided, rawer, nude-tarred nude-veiler am I!"

* * *

Comment: Somewhere between honest and cheater's palindromes on the scale of palindromic respectability reside what I would call "iterative" palindromes, palindromes such as the one that comprises the greater part of "Résumé Muser." (In the preceding text, the iterative portions are the two long passages in italics.) An iterative palindrome, in my parlance, is one that takes an easy route to palindromic lengthiness by incorporating a long list, or some similarly long, repetitive passage of a formulaic nature. Two familiar examples of iterative palindromes are those composed mainly of first names, and those that catalog things allegedly characteristic of Panama. To many, such easily-fabricated and often monotonous palindromes as these seem plainly inferior to non-iterative palindromes of comparable length.

Still, there are only so many known ways to formularize palindromic writing, and any new wrinkles would seem to warrant at least passing notice. That, at any rate, is my apologia for "Rèsumè Muser," which in its iterative segments demonstrates the working of a novel (to my knowledge) class of iterative palindromes that consist of a series of duplex terms made from recombined reversal pairs. To construct such palindromes, one begins with one or more groups of reversal and/or near-reversal groups having the same central letter(s); an example of the latter would be this quartet of near-reversals having in common the letter *s* as a central element:

deifiers : reified *deniers* : reined *detinuers* : reunited *detractors* : rot carted

Such pairs are not used intact in the palindrome, as that would undesirably result, usually, in the same term appearing in it twice; rather, they are recombined to create new terms. For example, the above group might be recombined as, say, *deifiers reunited* and *detractors reined* on one side of the palindrome and *deniers' rot carted* and *detinuers reified* on the other. (Any number of such groups of reversals or near-reversals, even if differing in their central elements, may be used together in the same palindrome.) The recombined terms chosen for the first half of the palindrome may then be strung together in any order, followed in the second half by their inverse terms in the reverse order. Non-iterative segments on the two ends of the palindrome (and perhaps elsewhere in it as well) provide whatever additional sentence structure is needed, e.g.: ***Said Dex, "In sum, Edna deifiers reunited, detractors reined, deniers' rot carted, detinuers reified and emus nixed, Dias."*** Various complexities may be introduced, but that is the essential blueprint for palindromes employing a "duplex" iteration pattern.

The iteration scheme used in "Résumé Muser" utilizes noun phrase duplex terms descriptive of a person; these mostly begin with *re-* and end in *-er*, with helper words such as *bare*, *care*, *hare*, etc. often enlisted to supply the initial *re-*. The word *a* serves as a connector between terms. The amount of vocabulary potentially available to this scheme is considerable; before tiring of the search, I collected well over 1000 usable, reasonably short reversal and near-reversal pairs for it, and that is probably only a fraction of the natural population. (For a list of 77 reversal pairs, most of which could be recombined for use in "Résumé Muser," see Table 2 of my "HeptCat" article in the February 2003 Word Ways.) Of those 1000+ collected pairs, "Résumé Muser" uses about 60.